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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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WHA/BSC FOR FRIEDMAN AND BLAKENEY
GUATEMALA FOR ALEX FEATHERSTONE
VILNIUS FOR THOMAS P. KELLY

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PREL AR VZ

SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH DAIA

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY. On April 19, Ambassador Wayne met with the President and several board members of the Delegation of Israeli and Argentine Associations (DAIA), the political representative of the Argentine Jewish community with a specific focus on preserving human rights, eradicating anti-Semitism, discrimination, and highlighting the threat of terrorism. The Ambassador recognized DAIA's role and the importance of keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive and noted the important relationship between the U.S. Holocaust Museum and its Argentine counterpart. The Ambassador also recognized DAIA for its valuable support to human rights and religious freedom in Argentina and its unflagging efforts to keep alive the memory of the victims of the bombings of the Israeli Embassy in 1992 and the AMIA center in 1994 and to bring the perpetrators of both attacks to justice. DAIA Secretary General Edgardo Waissbein, who attended the Latin

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America Jewish Congress in Caracas in March, described a fearful and isolated Venezuelan Jewish community. END SUMMARY.

Common Agenda

¶2. (SBU) On April 19, Ambassador Wayne met with DAIA President Aldo Donzis and two other board members from the Delegation of Israeli and Argentine Associations (DAIA), a non-profit organization that serves as the political representative of the Argentine Jewish community with a specific focus on preserving human rights, combating terrorist threats, and eradicating anti-Semitism, discrimination, and the persecution of minors. The Ambassador opened the meeting by recognizing Holocaust Memorial Day, and noting the importance of keeping this memory alive in the hopes of avoiding future crimes against humanity. He also highlighted that the U.S. Holocaust Museum has an ongoing relationship with its Argentine counterpart and is providing funding and technical assistance to protect and archive valuable historical documents concerning the stories of Holocaust survivors, the Jewish exodus to Argentina, and life of the Jewish community in Argentina.

¶3. (SBU) The DAIA representatives thanked the U.S. for the valuable cooperation between the U.S. and Argentine Holocaust museums. DAIA president Aldo Donzis said that most people do

not comprehend all that occurred during the Holocaust, argued the importance of constantly denouncing those atrocities, and expressed concern that governments that do not fully understand the Holocaust could represent a threat to global stability.

¶4. (SBU) The Ambassador noted the Embassy's historically close relationship with DAIA and praised DAIA's shared commitment to protecting and improving human rights. He expressed appreciation for DAIA's cooperation in providing input for the Embassy's annual Human Rights and Religious Freedom reports.

¶5. (SBU) The Ambassador also recognized DAIA's unflagging efforts to keep alive the memory of the victims of the terrorist bombings of the Israeli Embassy in 1992 and the AMIA center in 1994 and to bring the perpetrators of both to justice. He added that the USG continues to support Argentina's efforts in seeking justice for these cases.

Jewish Community in Venezuela

¶6. (SBU) DAIA Secretary General Edgardo Waissbein described his recent visit in March to Caracas where he took part in the Latin American Jewish Congress. He relayed the briefing by a prominent exiled political analyst, who presented the results of a recent survey that showed that while 90% of Venezuelans support Chavez, a majority of them do not agree with his policies toward the Jewish Community, his relationship with Cuba's Fidel Castro, his managing of bilateral relations with the U.S., and the adoption of Socialism. Waissbein also said the 15,000-strong Jewish community in Venezuela is afraid of the BRV's growing friendship with Iran and described increasing incidents of anti-Jewish graffiti in Venezuela. Because of this fear, he said, the Venezuelan Jewish community remains isolated, with much of the younger generation having little or no contact with the non-Jewish community.

WAYNE